

Pine Lakes is Myrtle Beach's oldest course, designed by Robert White, the first president of the PGA and the place where the idea of Sports Illustrated was first conceived. Additionally, both the course and its famed clubhouse are on the National Registry of Historic Places.



First Look at the New Granddaddy.

By Chris King

Plans for the renovation of Pine Lakes Country Club began in 2004. Craig Schreiner, the architect hired to restore The Granddaddy to its place among the Grand Strand's elite, faced a formidable task.

But golfers who tee off at the "new" Pine Lakes will not be disappointed. The course is substantially different from the one they remember, but paradoxically, it is more similar to the one Robert White designed in 1927.

In preparing for the project, some of White's original drawings were found in the Pine Lakes clubhouse, which included sketches of the greens and provided clues to the course's original routing.

"We were able to expand a little more intelligently because of some of the old drawings we found," said Schreiner. "There is a lot of responsibility in trying to maintain the old character or identifying it and bringing it back to life."

Nine holes, Nos. 10-18, are fairly intact. The "new" back nine mostly follow White's original specifications from tee to green, but with much greater movement in the fairways, as Schreiner raised the land's natural highs and lowered its lows, a means of defense for a course that has fewer than 40 bunkers.



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“When you just look at the golf course, it looks relatively flat. It’s not,” Schreiner said. “The greens appear higher because we dropped everything around the greens. We were able to drop the basins two to three feet and raise the greens approximately a foot.”

In recent years, as the rest of the course encroached, the greens at Pine Lakes had become very small. The redesign included the restoration of the greens to their original size. With undulating fairways and these elevated greens, players will return to a 6,800-yard Granddaddy that has plenty of spunk.

While the design changes are obvious, Schreiner also made Pine Lakes an environmentally friendly course, aided in part by Mother Nature. Every bunker on the course is filled with sand mined from the property that meets USGA specifications. In addition, the oak trees, pine trees and crepe myrtles that stood in the path of the redesign were moved and then returned to the course. And Schreiner increased the amount of water on the course 10-fold, while using an underground pipe system and the course’s undulation to create the Grand Strand’s best irrigation system.

The course also debuted a warm-weather grass that thrives on the course’s location. Paspalum, which can be cut to multiple heights, is the only grass at Pine Lakes, covering everything from tee to green.

The renovation of Pine Lakes was, according to Schreiner, “like taking the varnish off an old piece of furniture. If you paint something seven or eight times, all the detail gets lost. All you had to do was drop the lows and raise the highs, and the golf course just jumps out at you.

“I hope [golfers] love it, because I do.” 🌿

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